

Harold Hance is SBA Syracuse District's 2008 Small Business Person of the Year

“Harold Hance is a stalwart example of a North Country native who wanted to return to the North Country to make a difference in his community and provide employment for local individuals.”

-nominator, Delena Clark, director, NYS Small Business Development Center North Country

In celebration of National Small Business Week, the SBA's Syracuse District announced the Small Business Person of the Year for 2008, Harold Hance, managing partner of Mountain Valley Teleservices. The SBA will present the award at the May 5th SBA Excellence Awards luncheon in Albany.

Born in Plattsburgh, life has come full circle for Harold Hance- today he is the managing partner of Mountain Valley Teleservices in Plattsburgh. Harold gained experience in the call center industry as a sales agent and an international sales trainer in Maine. After the company filed for reorganization, Harold decided to venture out on his own and established Mountain Valley Teleservices, LLC.

Harold and his three partners started the teleservices company in April 2003 in Ausable Forks. The North Country Small Business Development Center helped with their business plans. The company was established as an inbound call center employing 35 people, located in the former Ausable Forks high school. Soon Mountain Valley Teleservices outgrew the available local workforce, so the company relocated to downtown Plattsburgh to take advantage of the larger population as well as closer proximity to Clinton Community College and SUNY Plattsburgh.

Innovative technologies have enabled Mountain Valley Teleservices to create a competitive advantage among its peers in the call center sector. Harold's software applications can provide clients with real time metrics for product sales better and faster than other centers of similar size. The high quality products are appreciated by more and more clients: Mountain Valley Teleservices experienced 90% growth in sales in 2006 and currently employs 140 full and part-time workers with a target of 200 by 2009. The resulting positive cash flow has allowed Harold's company to improve the employee benefit package and increase contributions to community sponsorships.

Harold Hance graduated from Willsboro Central High School in 1989. He then attended Clinton Community College and SUNY Plattsburgh. Harold entered the call center industry in 1998 as a sales agent. In 1999, he became a sales trainer for the same company and trained agents in Maine, Montreal and the Philippines.